CAPSULE SUMMARY
BA-3109
Blue Bird School
1402 Berwick Road
Ruxton, Baltimore County
Circa 1912
Private

The Blue Bird Schoolhouse is located at 1402 Berwick Road in the community of Ruxton in the Ninth District of Baltimore County. Ruxton is located near the western edge of the Ninth District, approximately two-and-a-half miles west of Towson. Built circa 1912, 1402 Berwick Road served as the Blue Bird Schoolhouse, later called the Ruxton Country School, from 1919 until 1993. From 1911 to 1960, the building also served as a home for the headmistress. The Blue Bird School was founded by Therese Waelchli to educate local children from kindergarten through the fourth grade.

Originally built as a dwelling between 1912 and 1914, the building was in use as a schoolhouse by 1920. A two-story wing was built onto the east elevation of the building in 1947. The building continued to function as a school until 1993. The original section of the dwelling is one-and-a-half stories in height and three bays wide and has a square footprint. It rests on a solid random rubble stone foundation and has a wood-frame structural system, which was originally clad in wood shingles. Only the west elevation retains the wood shingles, while the only other exposed elevation, the south, is clad with a combination of vinyl siding and dryvit. The house has wide eaves clad with vinyl and the hipped roof over the original section and additions is clad in asphalt shingles. One hipped dormer rises from the roof on the south elevation. Also on the property is one contributing garage built circa 1920 and positioned to the southeast of the dwelling.

Inventory No.

BA-3109

				4.00				
1. Name of P	roperty	(indicate prefe	red name)					
historic	Blue Bird S	Blue Bird School						
other	Ruxton Cou	ntry School, Inc.						
2. Location								
street and number	1402 Berwi	1402 Berwick Road				not for publication		
city, town	Ruxton				vicinity			
county	Baltimore C	County						
3. Owner of F	Property	(give names and m	ailing addresses of	all owners)				
name	Kent H. and	Suzanne T. Walker						
street and number	1402 Berwi	ck Road			telephone	Not A	vailable	
city, town	Towson		state	MD	zip code	21204		
city, town 5. Primary Lo Contributing R Contributing R Determined E Determined In Recorded by R	Towson Cation of Resource in Nation Resource in Local Resource for the Nation	Additional Donal Register District al Historic District tional Register/Marylan lational Registe	ata d Register	liber	10584	folio	527	
6. Classificat	ion							
district	Ownership public private both	Current Function agriculture commerce/trade defense X domestic education funerary government health care industry	landscape recreation/cult religion social transportation work in progre unknown vacant/not in o	Co ture		Noncontri	buting buildings sites structures objects Total g Resources Inventory	

7. Description

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Condition

___ excellent ___ deteriorated ___ good ___ ruins ___ fair ___ X_ altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Facing south, the dwelling at 1402 Berwick Road fronts close to the road and is sited on a sloping grassy lot with landscaping, mature trees and shrubs, and a gravel driveway. It is positioned at the corner of Berwick Road and Locust Avenue in the planned turn-of-the-20th-century development of Ruxton Heights. A garage is located to the southeast of the dwelling.

EXTERIOR

The building, which was originally built as a dwelling between 1912 and 1914, was in use as a schoolhouse by 1920. A two-story wing was built onto the east elevation of the building in 1947, to provide more space for the growing school population. The building continued to function as a school until 1993, when the current owners began to undertake alterations to convert the building back into a residence. The renovations have drastically altered the appearance and layout of the building and have resulted in a structure reflecting a modern interpretation of the Craftsman style. The original section of the dwelling is one-and-ahalf stories in height and three bays wide and has a square footprint. A second two-story addition is currently being built onto the north elevation of the original dwelling, and the 1947 wing has been expanded further to the east, thereby creating an L-shaped footprint. The original section of the dwelling rests on a solid random rubble stone foundation and has a wood-frame structural system, which was originally clad in wood shingles. Only the west elevation retains the wood shingles, while the only other exposed elevation, the south, is clad with a combination of vinyl siding and dryvit. Both additions rest on a solid foundation covered with dryvit. The house has wide eaves clad with vinyl and the hipped roof over the original section and additions is clad in asphalt shingles. One hipped dormer rises from the roof on the south elevation. Also on the property is one contributing garage built circa 1920 and positioned to the southeast of the dwelling.

The south elevation features the three bays of the original dwelling and two bays of the addition. The original section features a one-story, one-bay projecting entry vestibule with a half-hipped roof, added during the recent renovations. The roof extends past the wall and is supported by wood posts on piers covered with dryvit, thus creating a narrow porch. The vestibule features a one-leaf wood four-paneled door flanked by 1-light wood sash sidelights set above inset wood panels. The door and sidelights each have a 1-light fixed wood sash transom. New wood sash 1-light casement windows arranged in sets of three with 1-light fixed wood sash transoms set in square-edged wood surrounds flank the entry vestibule. This window arrangement and accompanying surround are both modern alterations and are repeated on all elevations of the dwelling. The south elevation of the addition has a raised basement covered with dryvit and featuring two sets of three 1-light casement windows. The first story of the addition displays two sets of windows repeating those found flanking the entry vestibule.

The east elevation features a boxed bay rising two stories from the raised basement to the first story. The raised basement of the east elevation features a one-leaf flush metal door and a set of three 1-light wood casement windows. The first story contains two sets of three 1-light wood casement windows, each with 1-light transoms.

Most of the north elevation was under construction at the time of the survey, however the north elevation of the addition extending to the east was visible. This elevation features five 1-light wood casement windows set in a groups of three and two in the raised basement story. These windows and their placement are repeated in the story above.

The west elevation still features many of the original materials. The random rubble stone foundation is still exposed on this elevation and the wood shingles cladding the structural system have not been removed. The raised basement contains one 6/6-light wood sash window. The first story has a fixed 1-light picture window, two 6/6-light wood sash windows and one 4/4-light wood sash window. All the double-hung windows are set in thin flush wood surrounds and have wood lug sills.

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Extensive remodeling has drastically altered the interior of the building and very little original materials remain. Plans for the remodeling of the original structure call for the removal of the interior walls. At the time of the survey, only two of the four original walls remain, dividing the space into four rooms. These four rooms are currently being used as a living room, kitchen, dining room, and storage room. The one-room entry vestibule extends to the south from the living room and the remodeled and extended addition contains five rooms used as bedrooms and bathrooms. The addition on the north elevation is currently being built. The majority of the original trim and decorative details have been removed due to the alterations and so most of the materials date to the turn of the twenty-first century and consist of stock molding. The floors in the original building are covered with carpeting, except the kitchen which features vinyl flooring, the floor of the addition is finished with modern floorboards, and the entry vestibule has flagstones. The walls are covered with drywall as are the ceilings unless otherwise noted. All of the new windows are set in stock wood surrounds as are all the replacement doors.

The living room contains a few original details, the most obvious of which is the spindle work located on the north wall. An arched opening in the north wall originally lead to a subsequently removed staircase to the basement and the top portion of the archway is decorated with wood spindles featuring knob-beads. Portions of north and east walls in the living room also retain a wood chair rail with a scotia- and fascia-molding profile. The northeast corner wall, below the chair rail is brick and marks where the fireplace was originally located. The heath has been blocked and the wall is covered by a book case. A second opening in the north wall leads to the storage room and a doorway in the west wall leads to the kitchen.

The kitchen contains two original windows in the west wall. These windows are set in molded wood surrounds with a thumbnail bead profile. Three window openings have been cut in the wall dividing the kitchen from the dining room. An open doorway leads to the dining room. The dining room features one original window with a square-edged wood sill and a flush wood surround. An open doorway leads to the unfinished storage room. The storage room has exposed lathe on the north wall and is devoid of ornament. A temporary quarter-turn open stringer stair with a handrail leads from this room down to the basement. Two original wood sash 6/6-light windows are located in the north wall and are not visible from the exterior due to the construction of the north addition. These windows have square-edged wood sills and a molded wood surround with a stepped fascia and scotia molding profile. An open doorway in the east wall provides access to the newly built east addition which contains only new materials.

The basement level of the original section of the building is in the process of being renovated and still retains some original features. It contains a hall, one bedroom, a family room, a storage room and a utility room. The floor of the rooms are covered with vinyl flooring and carpet. Most of the walls are covered with drywall but in some areas the wood framing is temporarily exposed. The ceiling is mainly covered with drywall but there is also some areas where the joists are presently exposed. A few of the doorways are set in flush wood surrounds while the others are set in molded wood surrounds with thumb profiles. One door has a molded wood surround with a cyma reversa profile. Most of the window surrounds have been removed but the few which remain feature a thumbnail bead and fascia molding profile.

SECONDARY RESOURCES

The one-story, one-bay garage, built circa 1920, has a square footprint. It rests on a solid random rubble foundation and has a wood-frame structural system clad with wood shingles and finished with wood cornerboards. The building has wide eaves and a hipped roof, which is covered with asphalt shingles. The building is no longer used as a garage and was converted to a classroom at an earlier date. Entrances featuring single-leaf flush wood doors are located on the south and west elevations. The building also has one 12-light wood casement window formed from two 6-light sash windows, two 6/6-light wood sash widows, and two 1-light fixed aluminum windows. All the double-hung windows are set in square-edged wood surrounds.

Period	Areas of Sig	eas of Significance		heck and justify			
1600-1699 1700-1799 1800-1899 _X 1900-1999 2000-		ogy cture rce nications nity planning	_x 	economics education engineering entertainment/ recreation ethnic heritage exploration/ settlement	 health/medicine industry invention landscape archite law literature maritime industry military 	cture	
Specific date	es c.	.1912, c.1919			Architect/Builder	Unkno	wn
Construction	n dates c.	.1912					
Evaluation for	G)						
Na	ational Registe	r		Maryla	and Register	_ X	not evaluated

Inventory No.

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Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance reports, complete evaluation on a DOE Form - see manual.)

Built circa 1912, 1402 Berwick Road served as the Blue Bird Schoolhouse, later called the Ruxton Country School, from 1919 until 1993. From 1911 to 1960, the building also served as a home for the headmistress. The Blue Bird School was founded by Therese Waelchli to educate local children from kindergarten through the fourth grade. Noted naturalist Tom Gilliard, nephew of Therese Waelchli allegedly developed his love of the outdoors while living with his aunt. The building is currently undergoing drastic alterations in order to transform the space back into a dwelling.

HISTORY

8. Significance

The Blue Bird Schoolhouse is located at 1402 Berwick Road in the community of Ruxton in the Ninth District of Baltimore County. Ruxton is located near the western edge of the Ninth District, approximately two-and-a-half miles west of Towson. The Ninth District includes the upper suburbs of Baltimore City, and is bordered by the Third, Eighth, Eleventh and Twelfth Districts. It is the smallest district in size with only 38.9 square miles, however, it contains the largest population. In 1870, the district had a population of 10,731 and a decade following it doubled in size with a total of 21,414 people.(1) Ruxton was named after Colonel Nicholas Ruxton Moore who owned numerous small farms in the area. Ruxton remained an agricultural area with a few mills until the late 1800s, when the farms began to be divided up for division to house an influx of residents who wished to live outside of Baltimore city.(2)

Berwick Road was platted as part of the Ruxton Heights neighborhood by the Landown Improvement Corporation in 1894.(3) The dwelling was constructed under the ownership of Stuart Olivier between 1911 and 1914. Prior to Olivier purchasing the property on which the house stands, the lots belonged to three separate owners. As the neighborhood further developed, the community began to recognize the need for a school within the neighborhood.(4) In 1913, Therese Waelchli, a recent immigrant from Switzerland, settled in the Ruxton Heights neighborhood and founded a school to educate children from kindergarten through to the fourth grade. The Fraulein School, which started with just three children, was first held on the porch of 1505 Berwick Avenue. Soon after it opened the name of the school was changed to the Blue Bird School due to anti-German sentiment brought about by World War I.(5) Therese Waelchli and Hans Froelicher, Jr. purchased equal shares in the property at 1402 Berwick Road in October of 1919 (6) and Therese Waelchli moved into the dwelling and begin to hold classes in her new home.

Miss Therese, as she was known to her students, had a "Montessorian" educational approach, believing that children could best learn in a home-like atmosphere. Although sometimes viewed as a bit of an eccentric, her approach to education created successful students and the Blue Bird School continued to attract pupils due to its excellent reputation. Therese Waelchli believed that children could learn a great deal from animals and so, to that end, a number of pets were housed at the school including cats, dogs, ponies and a monkey.(7) In 1921, Hans Froelicher sold his share of the interest in the property to Therese Waelchli's sister and brother-in-law Marie and Ernest Gilliard.(8) In 1932 they deeded their share over to Therese Waelchli.(9) Marie and Ernest

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Continuation Sheet
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Gilliard's son, Tom Gilliard, was raised by his aunt, Therese Waelchli and grew up to become one of the nation's leading naturalist, a love he allegedly developed while living with his aunt.(10) The continual growth of the student body necessitated the construction of a two-story wing in 1947.(11) Upon the death of Miss Therese in 1960, Helene Farchione, a long time teacher and assistant, became headmistress and continued the operation of the school.(12) She lived in the building with her extended family until 1972, when, due to ill health, she gave the school to a non-profit corporation (13) which continued to run the school at 1402 Berwick Road until 1993 when the property was sold to its current owners.(14)

ENDNOTES

- 1. J. Thomas Scharf, History of Baltimore City and County From the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men (Philadelphia, PA: Louis H. Everts, 1881. Reprinted by Higginson Book Company, Salem, MA), p. 870.
- 2. Brooke Guning and Molly O'Donovan, Towson and the Villages of Ruxton and Lutherville (Charleston, SC: Arcadia Publishing, 1999), p. 105
- 3. Plan of Ruxton Heights, 1894. Land Records Baltimore County, Plat book 1 Folio 64
- 4. The Jeffersonian (Ruxton), 6 April 1912.
- 5. Evening Sun (Baltimore), 1 November 1983.
- Baltimore County Land Records, Baltimore County Courthouse Liber WPC 514 Folio 302.
- 7. Evening Sun (Baltimore), 13 June 1960.
- 8. Baltimore County Land Records, Baltimore County Courthouse Liber WPC 565 Folio 27.
- 9. Baltimore County Land Records, Baltimore County Courthouse Liber CWB, JR. 984 Folio 490.
- 10. Evening Sun (Baltimore), 13 June 1960
- 11. Evening Sun (Baltimore), 1 November 1983.
- 12. Baltimore County Land Records, Baltimore County Courthouse Liber WJR 3528 Folio 152.
- 13. Baltimore County Land Records, Baltimore County Courthouse Liber 5276 Folio 611.
- 14. Baltimore County Land Records, Baltimore County Courthouse Liber 9614 Folio 251.

CHAIN OF TITLE

After the land was platted for subdivision in 1894, the lots which now compose 1402 Berwick Road were owned by three different owners who, between 1910 and 1911 sold their parcels to Stuart Olivier.

December 12, 1910
Daniel S. Carter and wife to Stuart Olivier
Baltimore County Land Records
Liber WPC 373 Folio 18

December 28, 1910

John D. Cochran and wife to Stuart Olivier

Baltimore County Land Records

Liber 372 Folio 260

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Number 8 Page 2

May 24, 1911 Dr. Dabney and wife to Stuart Olivier Baltimore County Land Records Liber 380 Folio 154

May 23, 1914 Stuart and Sarah Reeside Oliver to R. Bennett Darnall Baltimore County Land Records Liber WPC 429 folio 213

R. Bennett Darnall deeds one half interest in property to Hans and Joyce Froelicher and one half of the Interest in the property to Therese Waelchli
Baltimore County Land Records
Liber WPC 514 Folio 302

October 23, 1919

April 1, 199

May 1, 1921 Han Froelicher and wife to Marie T. Gilliard Baltimore County Land Records Liber WPC 565 Folio 27

March 18, 1932 Marie T. and Ernest T. Gilliard to Therese Waelchli Baltimore County Land Records Liber CWB, Jr. 984 Folio 490

April 30, 1959 Therese Waelchli to Francis C. and Helene K. Farchione Baltimore County Land Records Liber WJR 3528 Folio 152

June 20, 1972
Francis C. and Helen K. Farchione to Blue Bird School, Inc.
Baltimore County Land Records
Liber 5276 Folio 611

January 15, 1993
Blue Bird School, Inc. (Ruxton Country School) to Kent H. and Suzanne T. Walker Baltimore County Land Records
Liber 9614 Folio 251

Kent H. and Suzanne T. Walker to The Kent H. Walker and Suzanne Tenbroeck Walker Revocable Living Trust Baltimore County Land Records

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Name Blue Bird School
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Number ____ 8 __ Page __3

Liber 10584 Folio 527

9. Major Bibliographical References

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See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property 0.477 acres

Acreage of historical setting

0.477 acres

Quadrangle name

Cockeysville

Quadrangle scale

1:24,000

Verbal boundary description and justification

The Blue Bird School is located at 1402 Berwick Road in the Ruxton in the Eighth District of Baltimore County. It has historically been association with tax map 69 parcel 892.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title	J. Riggle, Architectural Historian		
organization	EHT Traceries	date	3/26/03
street and number	1121 Fifth Street, NW	telephone 2	202/393-1199
city or town	Washington	state DC zip	code 20001

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to:

Maryland Historical Trust DHCD/DHCP

100 Community Place Crownsville MD 21032

410-514-7600

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Name	Blue Bi	rd School	
Continu	ation She	et	
Number	9	Page	1

Baltimore County Land Records, Baltimore County Courthouse Liber CWB, JR. 984 Folio 490.

Baltimore County Land Records, Baltimore County Courthouse Liber WPC 514 Folio 302.

Baltimore County Land Records, Baltimore County Courthouse Liber WPC 565 Folio 27.

Baltimore County Land Records, Baltimore County Courthouse Liber WJR 3528 Folio 152.

Baltimore County Land Records, Baltimore County Courthouse Liber 5276 Folio 611.

Baltimore County Land Records, Baltimore County Courthouse Liber 9614 Folio 251.

Evening Sun. Baltimore. 13 June 1960.

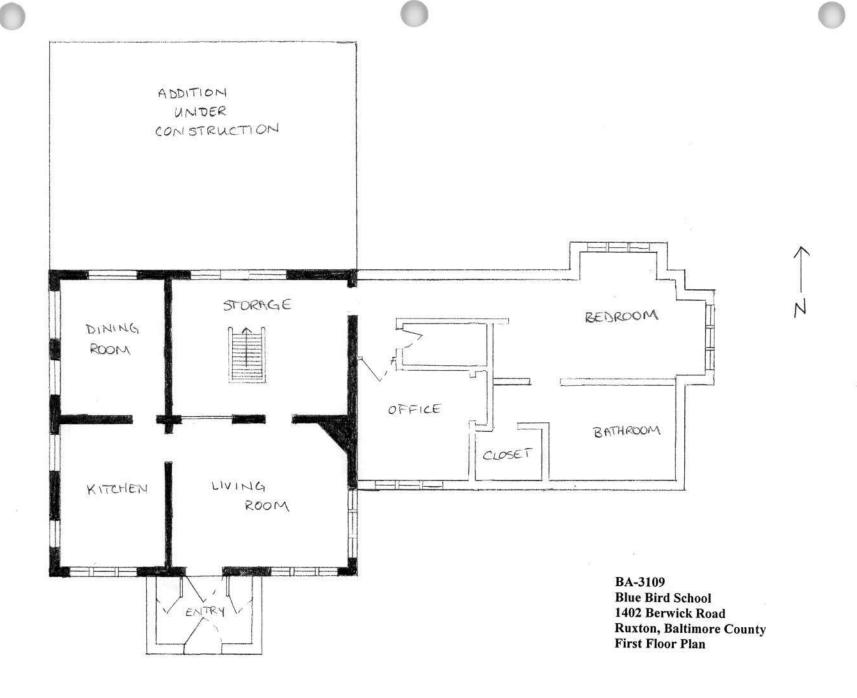
Evening Sun. Baltimore. 1 November 1983.

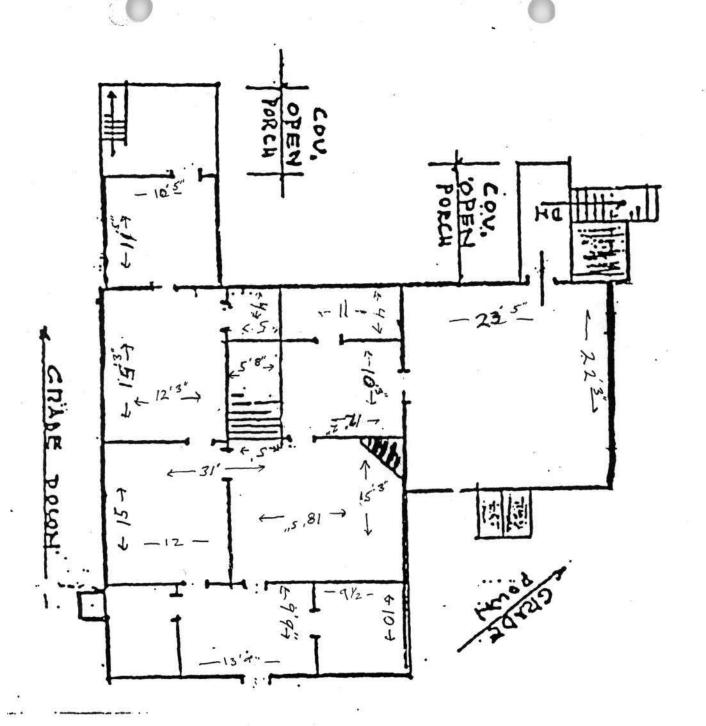
Guning, Brooke and Molly O'Donovan. Towson and the Villages of Ruxton and Lutherville. Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 1999.

Plan of Ruxton Heights, 1894. Land Records Baltimore County, Plat book 1 Folio 64

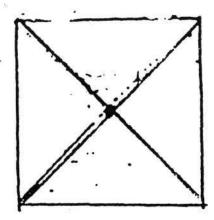
Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Baltimore City and County From the Earliest Period to the Present Day: Including Biographical Sketches of Their Representative Men. Philadelphia: Louis H. Everts, 1881.

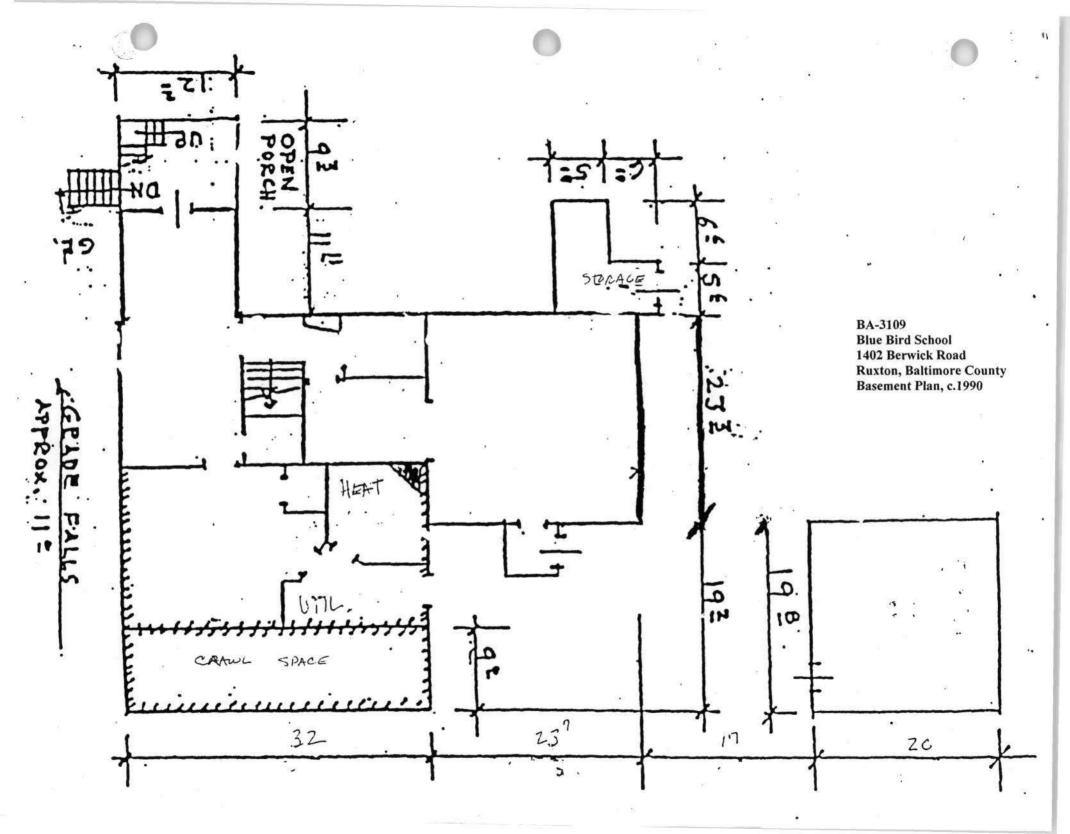
The Jeffersonian. Ruxton. 6 April 1912.

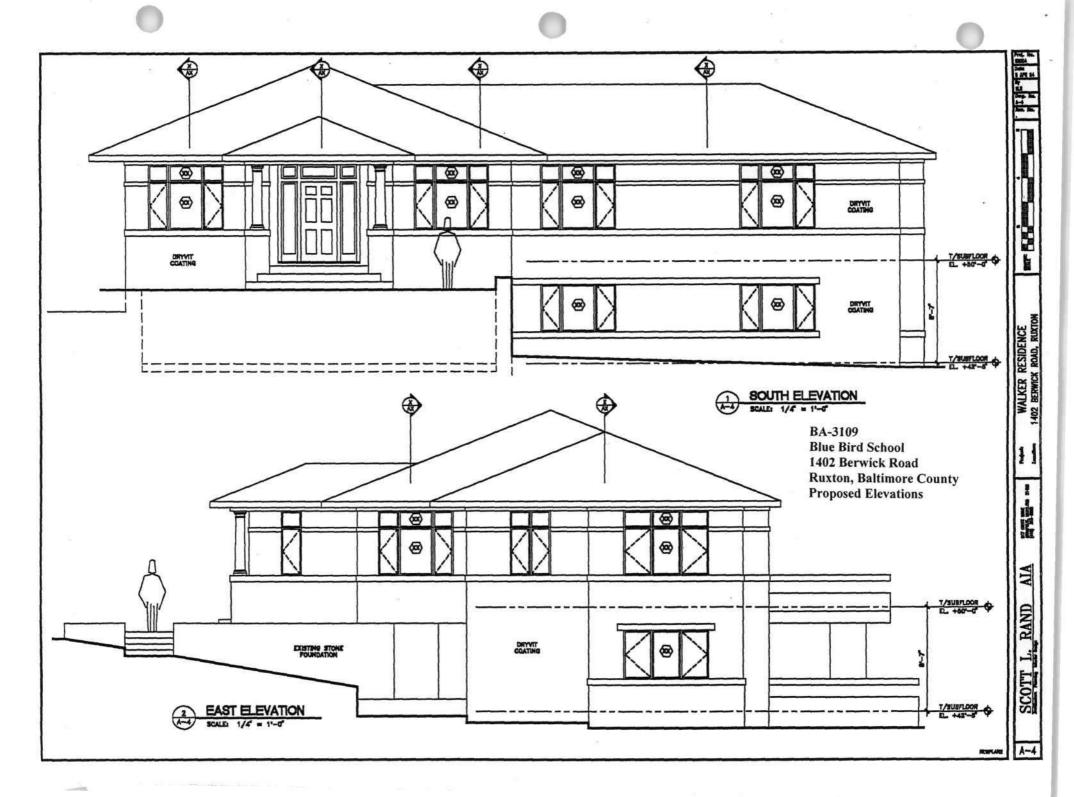


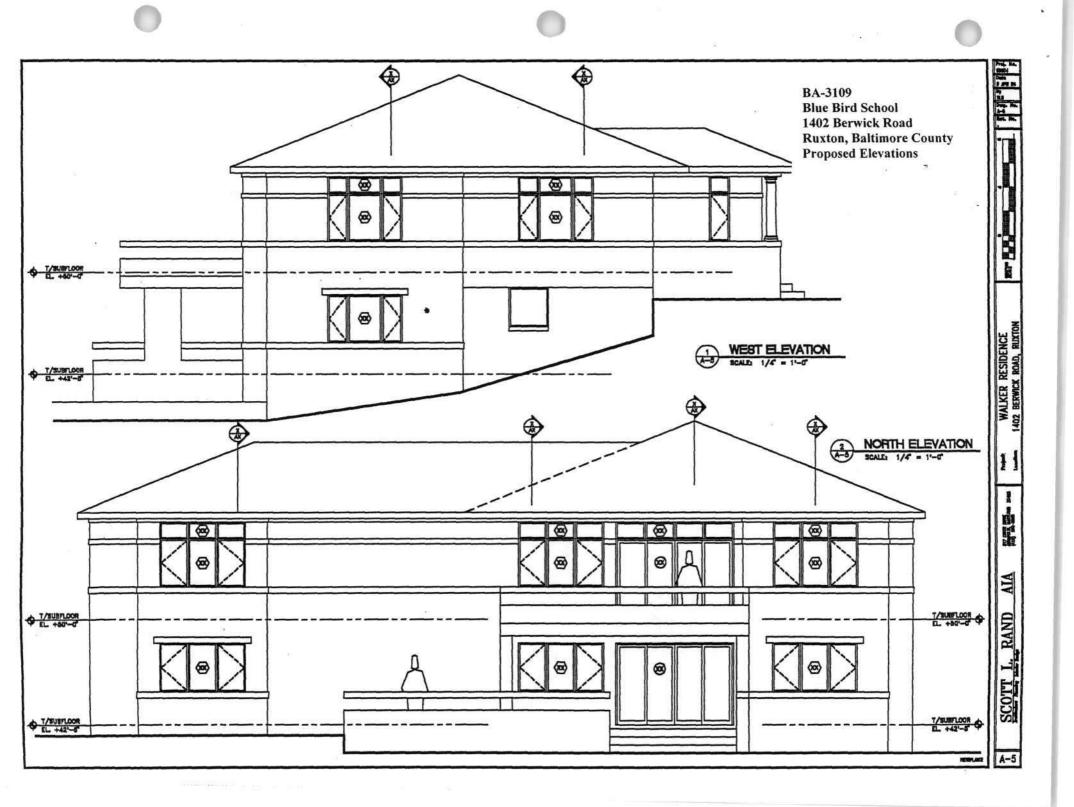


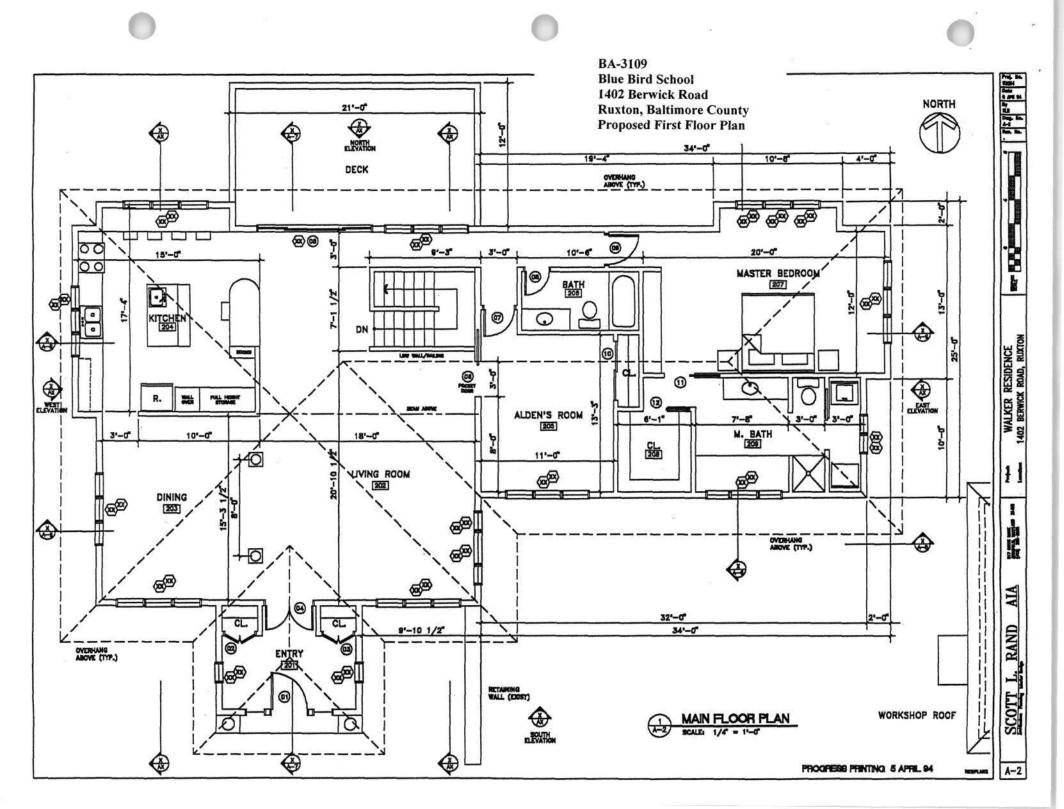
BA-3109 Blue Bird School 1402 Berwick Road Ruxton, Baltimore County First Floor Plan, c.1990

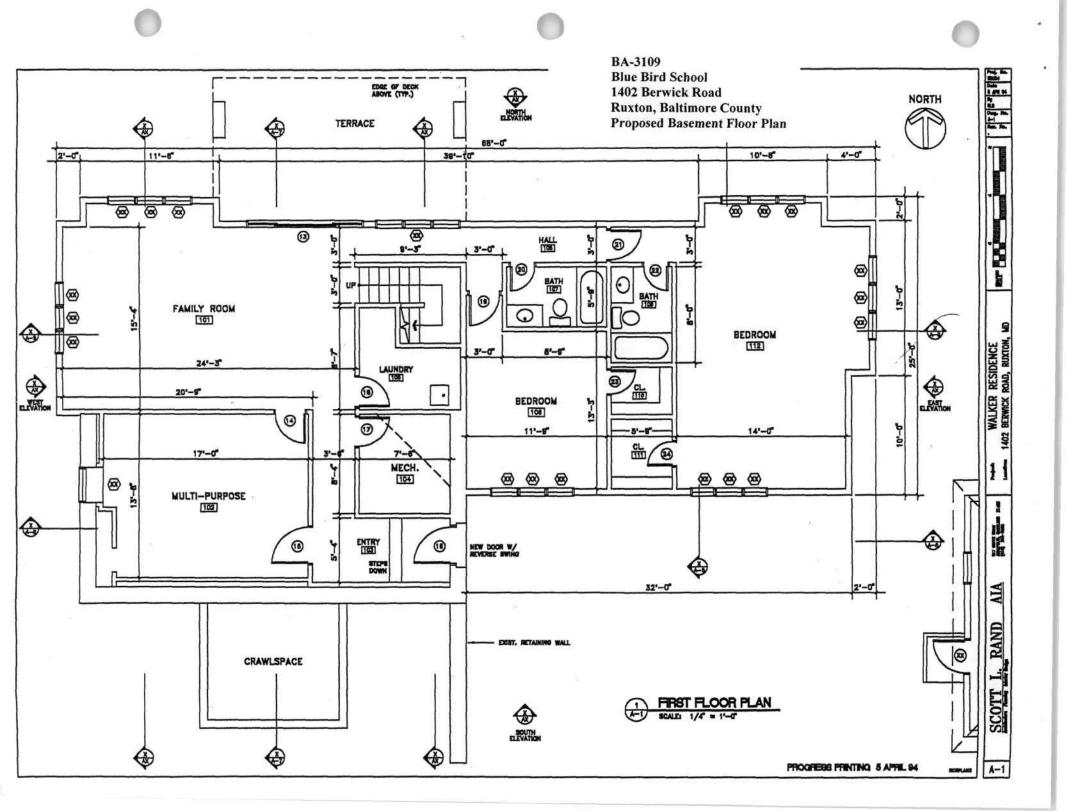


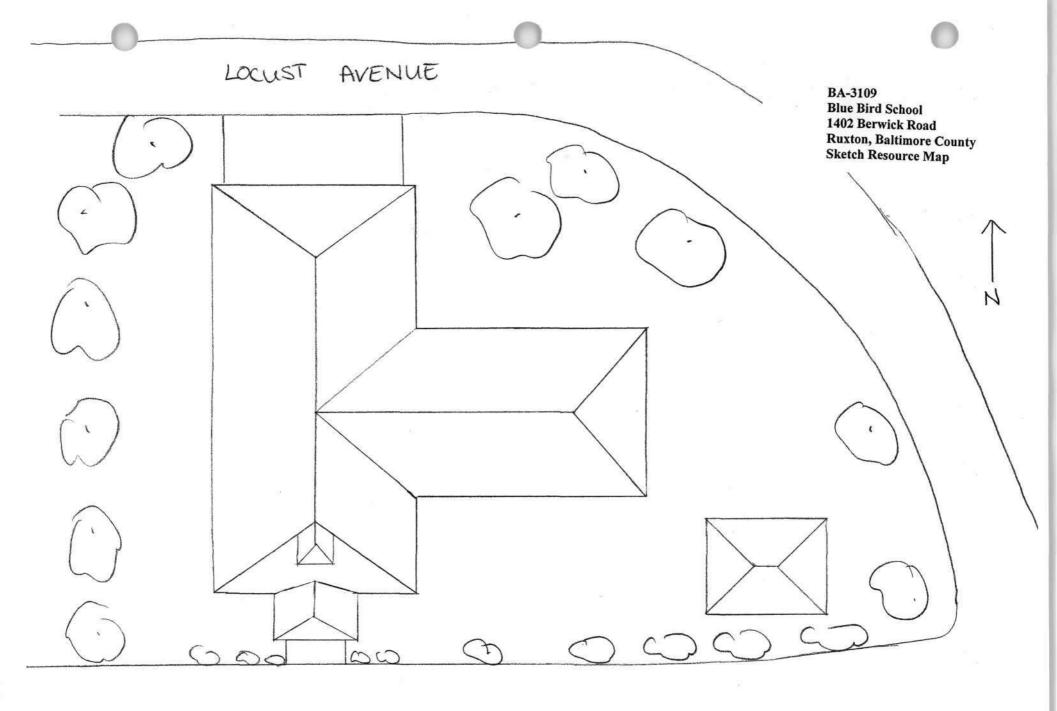




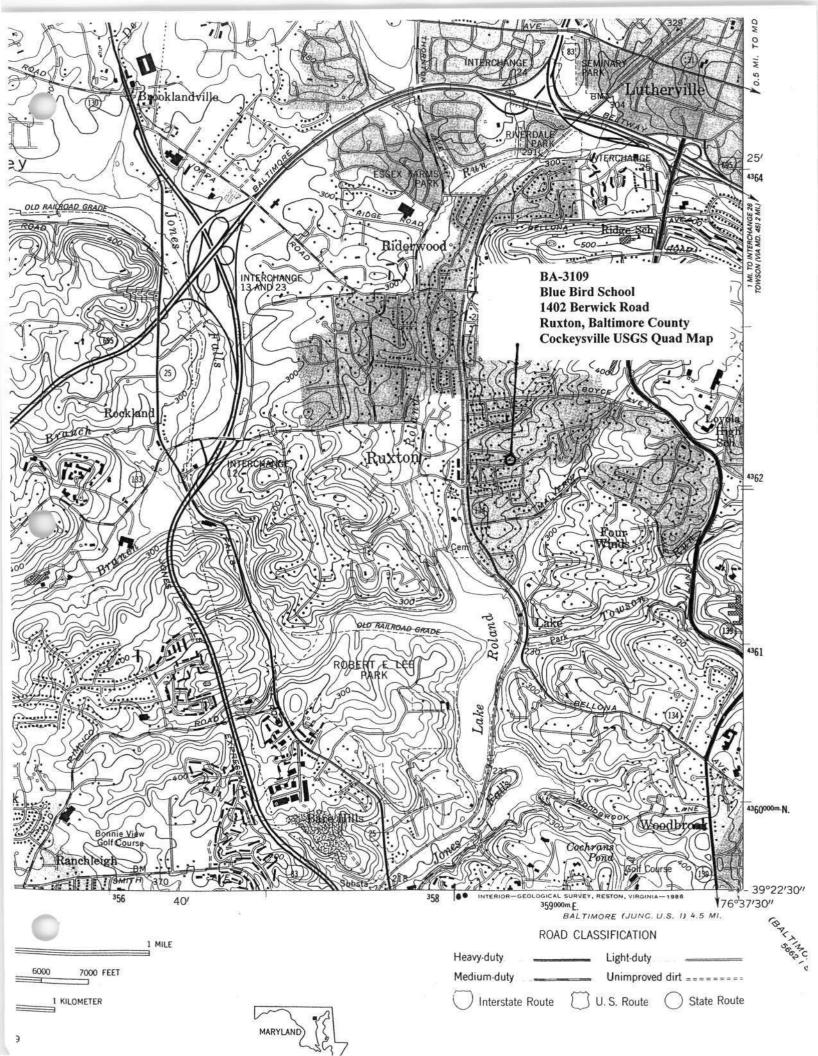








BERWICK ROAD





BA-3109 BLUE BIRD SCHOOL 1402 BERWICK ROAD BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD TRACERIES 3/2003 MD SHPO SOUTH ELEVATION 10F 12



BA-3109 Blue BIRD SCHOOL 1402 BERWICK ROAD BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD TRACERIES 3/2003 MDSHPO SOUTH WEST CORNER Z OF 12



BA-3109 BLUE BIRD SCHOOL 1402 BERWICK ROAD BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD TRACERIES 3/2003 MD SHPO HOUSE AND GARAGE, EAST ELEVATIONS 3 OF 12



BA-3109 BLUE BIRD SCHOOL 1402 BERWICK ROAD BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD TRACERIES 3/2003 MD SHPO GARAGE, SOUTH WEST CORNER 4 OF 12



BA-3109
BLUE BIRD SCHOOL HOUSE
1402 BERWICK ROAD
BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD
TRACERIES
3/2003

MD SHPO

FIRST FLOOR LIVING ROOM, VIEW LOOKING NE 5 OF 12



BA-3109 BLUE BIRD SCHOOL HOUSE 1402 BERWICK ROAD BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD TRACERIES 3/2003 MD SHPO FIRST FLOOR LIMNG ROOM, VIEW LOOKING SOUTH 6 OF 12



BA-3109 BLUE BIRD SCHOOL HOUSE 1402 BERWICK ROAD BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD TRACERIES 3/2003 MD SHPO FIRST FLOOR KITCHEN, VIEW LOOKING NORTH 7 OF 12



BA-3109 BLUE BIRD SCHOOL HOUSE 1402 BERWICK ROAD BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD TRACERIES 3/2003 MD SHPO VIEW LOOKING NORTH FIRST FLOOR DINING ROOM, 8 OF 12



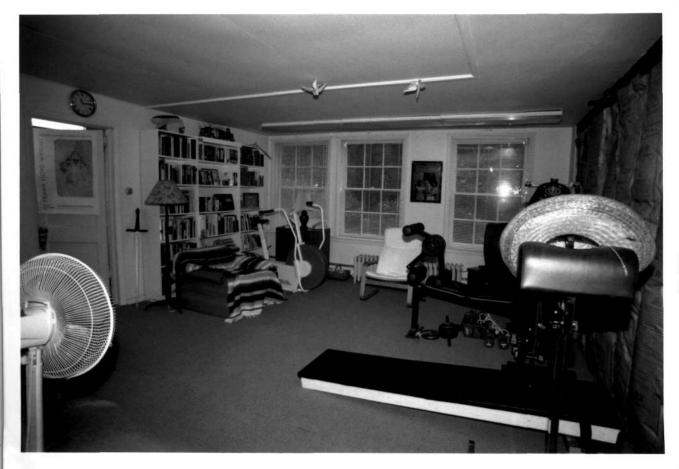
BA-3109 BLUE BIRD SCHOOL HOUSE 1402 BERWICK ROAD BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD TRACERIES 3/2003 MD SHPO FIRST FLOOR STORAGE ROOM, VIEW LOOKING EAST 9 OF12



BA-3109 BLUE BIRD SCHOOL HOUSE 1402 BERWICK ROAD BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD TRACERIES 3/2003 MD SHPO FIRST FLOOR STAIR CASE, VIEW LOOKING SOUTH 10 OF 12



BA - 3109 BLUE BIRD SCHOOL HOUSE 402 BERWICK ROAD BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD TRACERIES 3/2003 MD SHPO BASEMENT, VIEW LOOKING NORTHWEST 11 OF 12



BA -3109 BLUE BIRD SCHOOL HOUSE 1402 BERWICK ROAD BALTIMORE COUNTY, MD TRACERIES 3/2003 MD SHPO BASEMENT, VIEW LOOKING SOUTHWEST 12 OF 12